We claim:

1. A method of inactivating a virus, comprising contacting said virus with a virucidally effective amount of a composition consisting essentially of a C1, a C2, or a C3 alcohol or a C2, C3, or C4 diol, and a sufficient amount of an acid to adjust the pH of the composition to 4.6 or less.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein said alcohol is selected from the group consisting of methanol, ethanol, 1-propanol, and 2-propanol.
3. The method of claim 1, wherein said alcohol is selected from the group consisting of 2,3-butanediol, 1,2-butanediol, 1,3-butanediol, and 1,4-butanediol.
4. The method of claim 2, wherein said alcohol is ethanol.
5. The method of claim 1, wherein said acid is an organic acid.
6. The method of claim 5, wherein said organic acid selected from the group consisting of glycolic acid, lactic acid, succinic acid, malic acid, citric acid and acetic acid.
7. The method of claim 1, wherein said acid is an inorganic acid.
8. The method of claim 7, wherein said acid is hydrochloric acid.
9. The method of claim 1, wherein the pH of said composition is 2.45.
10. The method of claim 1, wherein the concentration of said alcohol in said composition is between about 0.2% and 12.5% by volume.
11. The method of claim 1, wherein said virus resides in the dermis or epidermis of a human or animal infected by said virus.
12. The method of claim 1, wherein said composition is applied topically to reduce or inhibit lesions in an animal or human suffering from an infection by said virus.
13. The method of claim 1, wherein said virus is a member of the Herpesviridae family.
14. The method of claim 13, wherein said virus is herpes simplex 1.
15. The method of claim 13, wherein said virus is herpes simplex 2.
16. The method of claim 1, wherein said virus is Varicella-zoster virus.
17. The method of claim 1, wherein said virus is a member of the Poxviridae family.
18. The method of claim 17, wherein said virus is molluscum contagiosum.

19. The method of claim 1, wherein said virus is selected from the group consisting of rhinoviruses, adenoviruses, enteroviruses, cornoviruses, respiratory syncytial viruses, influenza viruses and parainfluenza viruses.

20. The method of claim 1, wherein said composition is a preparation selected from the group consisting of a tincture, gel, ointment, cream, salve, lotion, lip balm, foam, spray and aerosol.

21. A method of inactivating a virus, comprising contacting said virus with a virucidally effective amount of a composition consisting essentially an alcohol selected from the group consisting of methanol, ethanol, 1-propanol, 2-propanol, 2,3-butanediol, 1,2-butanediol, 1,3-butanediol, and 1,4-butanediol, and a sufficient amount of an acid to adjust the pH of the composition to 4.6 or less, wherein said acid selected from the group consisting of glycolic acid, lactic acid, succinic acid, malic acid, citric acid, acetic acid, and hydrochloric acid.

22. The method of claim 21, wherein the pH of said composition is 2.45.

23. The method of claim 21, wherein the concentration of said alcohol in said composition is between about 0.2% and 12.5% by volume.

24. The method of claim 21, wherein said composition is applied topically to reduce or inhibit lesions in an animal or human suffering from an infection by said virus.

25. The method of claim 21, wherein said virus resides in the dermis or epidermis of a human or animal infected by said virus.

26. The method of claim 21, wherein said virus is a member of the Herpesviridae family.

27. The method of claim 26, wherein said virus is herpes simplex 1.

28. The method of claim 26, wherein said virus is herpes simplex 2.

29. The method of claim 26, wherein said virus is Varicella-zoster virus.

30. The method of claim 21, wherein said virus is a member of the Poxviridae family.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein said virus is molluscum contagiosum.

32. The method of claim 21, wherein said virus is selected from the group consisting of rhinoviruses, adenoviruses, enteroviruses, cornoviruses, respiratory syncytial viruses, influenza viruses and parainfluenza viruses.

33. The method of claim 21, wherein said composition is a topical preparation selected from the group consisting of a tincture, gel, ointment, cream, salve, lotion, lip balm, foam, spray and aerosol.